

BEFORE
THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
DOCKET NO. 2000-0040-C - ORDER NO. 2000-0365
APRIL 18, 2000

IN RE: Petition of e.spire Communications, Inc. for) ORDER MODIFYING
Arbitration of an Interconnection Agreement) ARBITRATION
with BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.) SCHEDULE AND
Pursuant to Section 252(b) of the) PREFILING DATES
Communications Act of 1934, as Amended.)

This matter comes before the Public Service Commission of South Carolina ("Commission") on the joint request of e.spire Communications, Inc. ("e.spire") and BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc. ("BellSouth") (collectively referred to herein as the "Parties") to modify the arbitration schedule previously established by the Commission in the instant docket.

The instant docket involves a Petition for Arbitration of an Interconnection Agreement. The Petition was filed by e.spire and requested that the Commission arbitrate an interconnection agreement between e.spire and BellSouth. Subsequent to the filing of the Petition, the Commission, by Order No. 2000-0124, dated February 3, 2000, established an arbitration plan and schedule. Later, the Commission modified the schedule of the proceeding by issuing Order No. 2000-0296, dated March 28, 2000. By the scheduling order, the hearing in this docket was scheduled to begin at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, April 3, 2000.

By letter dated March 31, 2000, written by counsel for e.spire and concurred with by counsel for BellSouth, the Parties requested that the hearing in this matter scheduled to begin at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, April 3, 2000, be rescheduled to begin at 2:30 P.M. on Tuesday, April 4,

2000. The parties state that a substantial reduction of outstanding issues in this matter is the reason for the request to reschedule the hearing. The parties also commit that they will continue to meet on the remaining issues and assert that they are hopeful that the extra time afforded by moving the hearing will be beneficial in their efforts to further reduce the number of unresolved issues. The Parties also state that they have agreed to request that the Commission extend the filing of BellSouth's Surrebuttal Testimony until noon on Monday, April 3, 2000.

Upon consideration of the Parties' requests, the Commission finds that the requests should be granted. The parties have demonstrated good cause in that they have substantially reduced the number of outstanding issues and have demonstrated a likelihood that additional issues may also be resolved. Further, as the Parties, through their negotiations, have reduced the number of outstanding issues before the Commission, the Commission will require less time in which to hear the matter. The Commission can determine no prejudice in rescheduling the hearing. Therefore, the Commission finds that the request to reschedule the hearing should be granted. Further, the Commission approves the Parties' request to extend the time for BellSouth to file its surrebuttal testimony until noon on Monday, April 3, 2000.

IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED THAT:

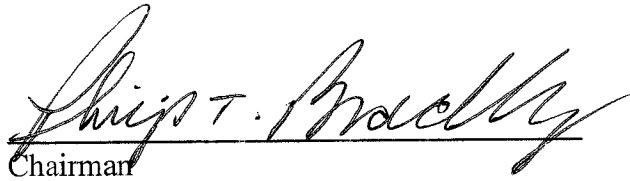
1. The hearing on this matter previously scheduled to begin at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, April 3, 2000, is rescheduled to begin at 2:30 P.M. on Tuesday, April 4, 2000.
2. BellSouth is granted an extension to prefile its surrebuttal testimony and exhibits until noon on Monday, April 3, 2000. Further, service on e.spire of BellSouth's surrebuttal testimony and exhibits may be accomplished by facsimile.

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3. This Order shall remain in full force and effect until further Order of the Commission.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION:


Chairman

ATTEST:


Executive Director

(SEAL)